

Amendment
Serial No. 10/531,722
Attorney Docket No. 052465

AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAWINGS

Please replace the sheet of drawing with Fig. 1 by the replacement sheet which is identical but of good quality version.

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REMARKS

By the present amendment, a replacement sheet of drawings with Fig. 1 is submitted.

Further, claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the subject matter of claims 4 and claim 16 has been amended to incorporate the subject matter of claim 19. Accordingly, claims 4 and 19 have been canceled, claims 5 and 7 have been amended to depend on claim 1 instead of claim 4, and claims 20 and 22 have been amended to depend on claim 16 instead of claim 19.

New independent claim 23 corresponding to claim 12 rewritten in independent form by incorporating the subject matter of claims 1 and 9, as well as new claims 24-26 corresponding to claims 13-15 but dependent on claim 23, have been added.

Claims 2, 6, 17, and 21 have been amended to delete the phrases beginning with "especially," and claim 15 has been amended to replace "the quarter diameter Φ " by "a quarter of the diameter Φ ." The specification has been amended accordingly in the paragraph starting on page 6, line 17.

Also, claim 1 has been amended to replace "characterized in that" by "wherein", claim 9 has been amended to delete the reference "15."

Claims 1-26 are pending in the present application. Claims 1 and 23 are the only independent claim.

Note that claims 4-6, 7, 12-15, and 19-22 are considered to contain subject matter allowable over the cited art.

In the Office Action, Fig. 1 is objected to as lacking clarity.

A replacement sheet with Fig. 1 in a good quality version is submitted with this paper.

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Next, in the Office Action, claims 2, 6, 15, 17, and 21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as indefinite. It is alleged in the Office Action that claims 2, 6, 17, and 21 define broad and narrow features simultaneously, and claim 15 should recite "inner diameter Φ " instead of "quarter diameter Φ ."

Claims 2, 6, 17, and 21 have been amended to delete the phrases beginning with "especially," and claim 15 has been amended to replace "the quarter diameter Φ " by "a quarter of the diameter Φ ." Accordingly, it is submitted that the rejection should be withdrawn.

Next, in the Office Action, claims 1-3, 9, and 16-18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as anticipated by US 4,522,171 to Dworak et al. ("Dworak"), claim 8 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as obvious over Dworak in view of US 4,176,649 to Karlovitz ("Karlovitz"), and claims 10-11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as obvious over Dworak in view of US 5,522,357 to Nogi et al. ("Nogi").

Present claim 1 incorporates the subject matter of claims 4 and present claim 16 incorporates the subject matter of claim 19. Since claims 4 and 19 are not included in the rejections over Dworak, it is submitted that the rejections are moot.

In addition, with respect to the dependent claims, the cited references fail to teach or suggest the combined features of these claims. Therefore, each of the dependent claims, and in particular claim 9, are not obvious over the cited references taken alone or in any combination.

In view of the above, it is submitted that the rejections should be withdrawn.

In conclusion, the invention as presently claimed is patentable. It is believed that the claims are in allowable condition and a notice to that effect is earnestly requested.

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In the event there is, in the Examiner's opinion, any outstanding issue and such issue may be resolved by means of a telephone interview, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned attorney at the telephone number listed below.

In the event this paper is not considered to be timely filed, the Applicants hereby petition for an appropriate extension of the response period. Please charge the fee for such extension and any other fees which may be required to our Deposit Account No. 502759.

Respectfully submitted,

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